PROCEEDINGS OF

THE BACON SOCIETY.

No. V.

At a meeting of the Society, held at the rooms of the Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, on the 28th of November, 1887, Mr. Alaric Alfred Watts, President, in the Chair:—

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The Secretary read a report of the progress of the Bacon-Shakespeare discussion in America and England during the last few months.

Mr. Fearon then read a paper contributed by Colonel H. L. Moore, of Lawrence, Kansas, U.S., on *Hamlet*, compared with the *Advancement of Learning*.

Mr. R. M. Theobald read a paper on the identical and peculiar use of the phrase *I Cannot Tell*, by Bacon and Shakespeare.

A vote of thanks to Colonel Moore for the paper on *Hamlet* was unanimously carried, and the Secretary was requested to communicate the same to Colonel Moore.

THE BACON-SHAKESPEARE CONTROVERSY.

August to November, 1887.

During the last three months the Bacon-Shakespeare controversy has attracted an unprecedented amount of discussion. The immediate occasion is the announcement of Mr. Donnelly's book on the Cipher which he claims to have found, and partly deciphered in the 1623 Folio. So far as this is concerned the Bacon Society reserves comment till the book is in our hands. The debate which it has occasioned is in itself so important, and brings our case so prominently before the public, that it is in itself deserving of careful report whether the exciting cause is a reality or a fiction. The ball was set a rolling by a long article contributed by Professor Davidson, to the New York *World* newspaper, of August 28, 1887. The Professor, while ostensibly giving only an account of his visit to Mr. Donnelly, has really written a concise summary of the Bacon-Shakespeare case. This memorable visit seems to have worked a revolution in the Professor's mind.

I must admit (he says), that I went with some reluctance and much misgiving. Indeed, though I had read some of the arguments adduced to prove that Bacon wrote Shakespeare, the notion seemed to me so preposterous that I was a confirmed scoffer, inclined to believe everybody a "crank" who maintained or accepted it. I am in duty bound to say that I returned very much shaken in my Shakesperian faith, and certainly very far from being a scoffer at the Baconian theory.

After giving a brief sketch of the most important contributions to the literature of the subject, he summarizes his observation of this part of the case as follows:—

It will be observed that the persons who have written the leading works in favour of the Baconian theory are by no means light-headed or visionary. Some are persons of known ability and learning; several are lawyers, and not one gives any sign of unreasonable bias. The truth is, the doubt raised thirty years ago with respect to the authorship of the Shakespearian plays has now assumed such dimensions, and is supported by so many strong arguments, that a man must be prejudiced indeed who does not accord it respectful attention and suspend his judgment until it is thoroughly discussed. One thing may fairly be said: If the plays had come down to us without any author's name attached, no fair-minded person, with the evidence now before the world, would hesitate a moment to admit that Bacon had, at the very least, a principal hand in their composition.

Then he tells us what Mr. Donnelly's book is intended to be. It is not merely a description and elucidation of the cipher, but a full statement of the whole argument. Indeed, this feature of the work seems to have impressed Professor Davidson even more than the Cipher; this being a literary discussion of independent interest.

The Baconian theory does not and will not stand or fall with Mr. Donnelly's Cipher. Of course, if the Cipher be universally accepted, the question of the authorship of the plays is set at rest, and Bacon is the author; in the other case Bacon may still be the author. Mr. Donnelly's cumulative argument in favour of the Baconian authorship seems to me so powerful that I am almost tempted to wish that he had been content with it and let the Cipher alone, and to hope that at least the two parts of the work will be published separately.

As to William Shakspere himself, this is his portrait as Professor Davidson reports it:—

Mr. Donnelly brings good evidence to show that Shakspere was a fornicator, an adulterer, a usurer, an oppressor of the poor, a liar, a forger of pedigrees in order to obtain a coat-of-arms to which he had no right, a poacher, a drunkard, an undutiful son and a negligent father. About many of the above charges there has hardly ever been any doubt, and they are admitted even by some of his most ardent admirers. But when they are lumped together they make a formidable list. The only extant letter addressed to Shakspere is one asking a loan of £30 on security, and we have authentic accounts of several suits brought by him against creditors, both in London and Stratford. There can hardly be any doubt that the pedigree which he constructed for himself in order to obtain a coat-of-arms from the Herald's College and so enter the ranks of "gentlemen," was "wholesale lying," and that Shakspere knew it was. That he was accessory to an attempt to inclose the common lands of Stratford and so oppress the poor is beyond doubt.

His daughter Judith could neither read nor write, but, like many other members of the family, signed her name with a sort of rude cross. —Poor Judith! She could not even read the writings that went by her father's name. And yet with what divine anathemas does the author of the plays scourge undutifulness to parents and ignorance! The same Judith went through a hurried and unlicensed marriage for which the parties were forced to atone before the ecclesiastical court at Worcester. Even the other daughter Susanna's conduct was not above suspicion. It has been said that William Shakspere was the best of his family, and this seemingly was true. But it is likewise true that there is not recorded of him one noble or lovable action. This is a surprising fact, and one that it is hard to get over.

Professor Davidson then summarizes the well-known negative facts as to Shakspere's blank and uninteresting personality—his literary destitution—the absence of books altogether, and of any manuscripts that can be connected with the plays. He might have made one exception, in the famous Northumberland House MS., in which "Shakespeare" is found lying *perdu* amongst Bacon's MSS., and fragments out of the plays and poems are left by accident, not picked up by the industrious hand which had removed the most palpable portions of the Shakesperian MSS., viz., those of the two plays of Richard II. and Richard III. There is only one place where it is known that a MS. of "Shakespeare" once existed, and that is in Bacon's portfolio. This is incontestable fact, and carries with it a world of inference. It clinches all the indirect arguments, and gives them a positive validity. The whole argument is summarised at great length by Professor Davidson, but we need not pursue it in detail.

As to the Cipher, he has no fresh information to give: but as he seems to have examined it more carefully than any one who has yet reported on it, it is interesting to trace the impression it left on his mind.

Though Mr. Donnelly took great pains to explain the nature and method of his Cipher to me, he still left, and that intentionally, one point dark. That Mr. Donnelly sincerely believes all that he claims, I do not doubt for an instant; that he has worked at his Cipher with fabulous diligence I am certain; that his calculations are (barring clerical errors) correct, I am entirely convinced. The amount of calculation through which Mr. Donnelly has gone in connection with his Cipher is truly astonishing. Though he writes a fine, close hand and on both sides of the paper, the slips on which he has made his calculations, and which he has preserved, form a bundle which it took nearly all my strength to lift with one hand. What I do not know of my own knowledge is whether his *method* of working is altogether a legitimate one; but Mr. Donnelly has answered my questions bearing on this matter so unhesitatingly that I can hardly see how he can be mistaken.

There seem only three conclusions possible—either (1) Mr. Donnelly is entirely right, a real cipher has been found, and the narrative resulting is authentic; or (2) Mr. Donnelly is deluded by his own enthusiasm and his process is illegitimate; or (3) Mr. Donnelly is trying to perpetrate a fraud. Now, the third of these alternatives seems to me impossible—nay, absolutely ridiculous, and undeserving of a moment's consideration. The second, though of course possible, seems to me in the highest degree improbable, when I consider Mr. Donnelly's character, simplicity and intelligence. He must know that, if he is

mistaken, he can only be laughed at; and that in a very short time. He has made the issue a very simple one. The first conclusion being, though paradoxical, certainly possible, seems to account best for the facts. If this is the case, then the authorship of the plays is, in the main, definitely settled, and a most important page is added to the history of Elizabeth and James. I am quite sure that, under any circumstances, it will take a long time to familiarize the public mind with this result; but if it is correct, it must in the end be accepted. For the present, I hold my judgment in suspense.

The *World* continues the discussion in its issue of Sept. 4. In an editorial article it is affirmed that the Baconian theory merits thorough and critical attention. History is being re-written in these days. Emerson defines history as "lies agreed upon." The writer strings together a group of exploded fictions, Homer, Columbus, Helen of Troy, Ulysses, Æneas, Romulus and Remus, William Tell, Pocahontas.

The restless spirit of investigation invades every field. Out of the alembic of modern scientific enquiry the pretended records of the past come relieved of much alloy of fiction and fancy. There is hardly a prominent character in history whose status has not been materially changed. Some idols have been dethroned from high places and others exalted in their stead. It is not to be expected that Shakspere, with his indistinct and unsatisfactory personality, should escape this searching scrutiny.

The opinions of various living literati is given. Mr. Allen Thorndike Rice, Editor of the *North American Review*, gives a Scotch verdict, "not proven," but announces a new discovery, which we will refer to subsequently. General Butler writes as a decided believer; Col. Ingersol as a disbeliever, and an extravagant calumniator of Bacon. Anyone who can speak of Bacon as "one of the most polished scoundrels of his age," may stand aside; we prefer his opposition to his assent. Julian Hawthorne is friendly but unconvinced. He inherits his favourable bias from his father.

In the *World* of Sept. 18, Professor Davidson again speaks, and gives the results of reading Halliwell-Phillipps's "Outlines," viz., "that I am much less inclined than before to believe that he wrote the plays attributed to him," and then he runs through a large mass of detail respecting the original publication, and the contemporary evidences of authorship.

The next stage in this very energetic discussion brings the *North American Review* to the front. The October number contains a double

article by Mr. Hugh Black, and by Mr. Edward Gordon Clark, and this article is heralded and to a great extent anticipated by the *World*, of Sept. 25. The contention of these two writers is that there is a Cipher concealed in the inscription on Shakspere's gravestone, and that by applying the Baconian Cipher-key the statement that Francis Bacon was the writer of the plays may be worked out. There are many difficulties in the way of accepting this gravestone Cipher. In the first place it is almost impossible to be sure that the text itself is perfect, In Bacon's Cipher every letter, according to its form, stands for either *a* or *b*; and every five consecutive letters stand for one letter, according to the mode in which the *a*'s and *b*'s are combined. Thus *aaaaa* = *a*; *aaaab* = *b*: and it is plain that an alphabet is easily formed by these permutations of *a*'s and *b*'s in groups of 5. Now in the inscription it is supposed that the letters have this duality of type, and that the small letters are all *a*'s; and the large, *b*'s. But the difficulty is to find out how the inscription was really written. If you take a rubbing or a photographic fac-simile of the existing tombstone there certainly is no such irregularity of type as can supply material for a cipher. But this is not the original stone. That was removed about 90 years ago, so Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps tells us, because it had sunk below the surface of the ground and had fallen into decay. Another was substituted, giving the text but apparently not the typography of the old inscription. In Mr. Charles Knight's rendering of the epitaph he follows the good old Shakesperian Editor Steevens, whose edition of Shakespeare was published in 1760, when consequently the old stone still remained. He says it was "an uncouth mixture of small and large capital letters," and this is his version of it:—

GOOD FREND FOR JESUS SAKE FORBEARE
TO DIGG T-E DUST ENCLOASED HE.RE.
BLESE BE T-E MAN $\frac{T}{Y}$ SPARES T-ES STONES
AND CURST BE HE $\frac{T}{Y}$ MOVES MY BONES.

If this is accepted as an accurate reproduction of the original, it is easy to apply Bacon's cipher to it. The first line for instance, with the first letter of the second line, would read thus:—

baaab aaaaa aabaa aabbb baaaa aaaab,

which according to Bacon's cipher stands for S A E H R B. The whole gives the following letters:—

S A E H R

B A Y E | E P
R F T A | X A

R A W A R

The letters detached by the line form the word Shaxpeare, which Mr. Black takes as the signature to the concealed sentence. In commenting on these cipher schemes I must speak in my own name, not wishing to commit the Bacon Society to my own doubtful and crude impressions. If these letters contain a sentence they must be manipulated; and here another difficulty arises: on what principle are they to be arranged? Mr. Black does not give any exact law, but only a "certain order," which does not amount to much. However, regarding the letters as an unresolved anagram, he evolves five word-fragments, *Fra Ba wrt ear ay*; and he supposes that these are intended to suggest the complete sentence, *Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays*. Mr. Clarke takes up the same problem and manages to extract a number of similar sentences from this gravestone; the methods which he uses are so intricate, and seem to me so artificial and arbitrary, that I am unable to find the least interest in them, and I am only thankful that the Baconian theory has other and better evidence than this to rest upon.

Yet another cipher discovery is announced by Mr. Herbert Janvrin Browne, in a small pamphlet entitled, "Is it Shakespeare's Confession?" The cipher which Mr. Browne professes to expound depends first on the use of a new alphabet, in which A is represented by O, B by P, C by Q, and so on. The gravestone inscription is translated into this new alphabet, and the two versions are run in parallel lines, each letter with its corresponding new alphabet letter placed beneath. Here my exposition must stop, for I frankly confess that, after prolonged and painful study, I can make nothing more of it. Mr. Browne, starting from the 53rd letter, the locus of a significant hiatus in the verse, finds the letter F; counting on 34 more letters he comes to R; 34 more letters bring us to A; 34 more to N, and so on till Francis is evolved. This would be very convincing if the law of counting could be verified: but for the life of me I cannot see how the successive leaps of 34 letters are made, nor how the counting for the next word, in which 27 is used, is started or applied. The whole business in my eyes is a hopeless *hocus pocus*. If Mr. Browne understands it himself I shall regard him with awe, as a seer who has been privileged with

an Apocalypse, too deep and esoteric for uncouched eyes to see. The sentence he finds is, *Francis Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays:* with the signature *Shaxpeare.* It is so immensely probable that Bacon has put his secret somewhere into cipher, that I am disposed to speak very modestly about all these announcements of cipher discovery. In all such cases there are great difficulties; in Mr. Donnelly's most of all, as it is the most elaborate of all. We expect a cipher to be intricate, and it may be that if I could devote a much longer time, and bring to the study the knowledge and education of an expert, I might be more impressed by the diagrams and calculations of Mr. Black, Mr. Clark, and Mr. Browne. So far as we have yet arrived the ciphers have yielded no positive results. But they have forced our question to the front. The mere announcement of Mr. Donnelly's book has excited an amount of attention and interest in America which our conservative and insular nation can scarcely understand; in time, after more provocation, perhaps we shall catch the contagion.

Professor Davidson, speaking for himself, has given a comprehensive statement of the argument which, although very far from complete, and entirely wanting in the most important branch of the evidence—that derived from Bacon's own writings—is yet so conclusive that it establishes much more than antecedent probability;—it certainly leaves William Shakspere's seat vacant, and gives strong preliminary evidence to show that Francis Bacon alone is entitled to the derelict literary sovereignty.

Amidst such a crowd of debaters of course the opposition has a large share of talk. One of the most elaborate of these is an article of two columns in the *Milwaukee Telegraph*, of October 2, by Judge Bealey. It would be satisfactory to reproduce this article *in extenso*, as a specimen of the extraordinary feebleness of the arguments by which Shakspere's possession is vindicated. It is not often that our opponents produce their arguments at all: they generally satisfy themselves with magniloquent expressions of righteous contempt or severe indignation. Judge Bealey has plenty of this, but he is rash enough to tabulate his arguments in 13 headings: what he calls positive evidences. Here they are,—condensed, but not distorted—with our own brief comments put into bracketted *asides:*—

"1. During his whole life Shakspere enjoyed, without dispute, the reputation of having been the author. [Exactly what the concealed author intended.]

"2. He made his fortune out of them. [This is mere assumption: it is not at all likely that 'Shakespeare' was the chief attraction of

any theatre in those times. And among all other documents William Shakspere's cash books certainly have not been handed down.]

"3. His own contemporaries are next cited as witnesses; even Marlowe, who died in 1593, Ben Jonson, Drayton, Chettle, Meres, Digges, Spenser, Heminge, Condell. [Not one of these gives any evidence that bears on the real question: what some of them say requires interpretation.]

"4. His immediate successors bear the same testimony: Milton and Dryden never doubted him. ['Who never doubted never half believed.' Therefore Milton and Dryden never half believed.]

"5. The next generation was equally enthusiastic: Not a single voice raised.

"6. Johnson, Addison, Pope have no suspicions.

"7. All the eighteenth century critics concur.

"8. So does the first half of the nineteenth century.

"9. The 1623 Folio was ascribed to him; and Ben Jonson, &c., are the subscribing witnesses.

"10. Hundreds of editions have followed, involving laborious research and criticism, and yet never a doubt was expressed.

"11. The book stands alone, without a rival. [All these seven paragraphs amount to nothing, and our comment on No. 4 is still applicable. The witnesses cited are scarcely "half-believers."]

"12. Shakspere died, and the dramas and poems ceased: they were written in his life, and ceased at his death. [This amazing assertion is made in defiance of the fact that more than half the contents of the Folio was never published till seven years after Shakspere's death; and many of the plays then published had never even been heard of.]

"13. Heminge and Condell profess to publish from the original MSS. received from Shakspere himself." [The first Folio is an enigma, and it is against all reason to use its mysterious utterances as if they were simple, straightforward statements of fact.]

Further, Judge Bealey pronounces Bacon to be quite incapable of writing such poetry as Shakespeare's: "You may search his productions through and through, and you find not a single flash of that genius which has rendered Shakspere immortal." This very remarkable utterance scarcely needs notice; for a refutation of it the last number of our Journal may be quoted. Such assertions as these are simply statements of personal taste, faculty, or perception, and in this point of view they are very valuable, because they enable us to take measurement of the speaker. We may here add another testimony

which may perhaps be considered to be almost as conclusive as that of Judge Bealey. Sir E. B. Lytton, in his Essay on Sir Thomas Browne, which appeared in the "Edinburgh Review," 1836, says, "We have only to open the 'Advancement of Learning,' to see how the Attic bees clustered above the cradle of the new Philosophy. Poetry pervaded the thoughts, it inspired the similes, it hymned in the majestic sentences, of the wisest of mankind."

We have dwelt longer on this paper of Judge Bealey's, because it is more satisfactory to look steadily at one than to glance rapidly over a score. Mr. Dwight Baldwin writes at equal or greater length, and with the same purpose of vindicating Shakespere, and thrusting aside Bacon. He also trots out Green, Chettle, Ben Jonson, Fuller, and others. And then he comes to Mr. Donnelly, and so far as Cipher disclosures are concerned, Mr. Baldwin has prepared himself for the worst. The following passage is very suggestive, showing that no evidence whatever, not even a verified and authentic Cipher, probably not a well attested affidavit, if these are ever produced, will convince resolute anti-Baconians of Mr. Baldwin's type:—

"But suppose that the edition of 1623 does contain a Cipher, in which Francis Bacon claimed to have written the plays of William Shakespeare, what does that prove? That he wrote the plays? No! Rather that he was a greater, brighter, more daring, and far-seeing knave than the world has hitherto thought possible."

Mr. Dwight Baldwin thinks Bacon's thirst for fame was so insatiable, that he was quite capable of stealing the posthumous credit of William Shakspere, if he had a chance of making a burglarious entrance into his literary treasure-house. Evidently we need not waste our breath in the attempt to reason with opponents such as Mr. Baldwin. It is not often one comes across that robust order of scepticism that is capable of confronting not only Moses and the prophets, but any possible affidavit that either the living or the dead can produce.

Other references to the Baconian case might be brought forward—some very comic. The *Missouri Republican* has a very funny article, giving a Cipher in Longfellow's "Psalm of Life," which is to show that Longfellow's poems were written by a market gardener, named Bloodgood Cutter, whose very Mongolian features are engraved side by side with those of the reputed author. The first clue to this discovery is the very significant line, "Things are not what they seem;" with the hint, that some "footprints in the sands of time" have to be tracked home to their proper owner. There is a good deal

of this excellent fooling, which Mr. Donnelly may relish just as well as his opponents. Other papers give simply a cargo of crude impressions, by more or less notable people, which are, as a rule, positive and violent in exact proportion to the ignorance and confusion of the writer's mental state.

In the English papers we can hear only faint echoes of all the resounding din of the American press. The *Saturday Review* has spoken in an article entitled, *Bakespeare*. This is mainly devoted to Mr. Donnelly, and as we hold no brief for him, it does not much concern us. The writer describes the process of Cipher working, chiefly from his inner consciousness; and as that psychic retreat is about as full of infallibility, scorn, and resolute determination to smash up the whole Baconian structure, as it can possibly be, of course the Cipher is easily shown to be supremely idiotic, and the resulting contempt is very cheap. Articles of this character are really so unimportant, that it is quite unnecessary for us to discuss them, and as the large majority of English references are of this class, we are content to leave most of them alone. The *St. James' Gazette* talks in the same style as the *Saturday Review*. The *Pall Mall*, it must be owned, writes in a very different strain. It has devoted two articles to the Cipher and the general question, and it speaks of our own branch of the case with commendable fairness, quoting our own expressed determination to withhold both "criticism and certification" from Mr. Donnelly's Cipher till we really know what it is, and accepting this as an example worth following. The little paper, which calls itself *Wit and Wisdom*, has been passing through a curious mental crisis. On September 24, it produced a paragraph in the accepted style of the current journalism. The key-notes to this sort of talk are such words as craze, madness, muzzle, palpable fraud and imposition, and so forth. However, the editor found that this sort of rant was not acceptable to some of his readers, and in the issue of October 15 another paragraph appeared, twice as long and entirely different in tone and intent, giving a fairly accurate account of some of the leading features of the Baconian case, without a scornful expression from beginning to end.

Literary Opinion and Book Trade Review, for November 1, gives rather more than three columns to the discussion of the "Bacon or Shakspere" case. It is almost entirely adapted from Professor Davidson's articles in the *New York World*. The writer gives no

decision for himself, but ingenuously allows that "the indictment is certainly heavy."

Three articles in *Knowledge*, in August, September, and November, refer to different aspects of Shakespeare and Bacon study. The *November article* discusses Mr. Donnelly's Cipher, and the writer having the advantage of his own conception instead of Mr. Donnelly's account, which is not yet accessible to any one, has not much difficulty in proving that this same conception is extremely absurd. But how that circumstance bears on Mr. Donnelly's unrevealed, unpublished discovery, the writer does not say. The writer tells his dream, and then shows what a stupid dream it is; which is not very important.

The *September article* is devoted to Shakespeare's Sonnets. The argument of the article is really directed against the Baconian theory, and it rests on a curious misapprehension of what that theory really is. The writer supposes that it applies only to the plays, and not at all to the poems; and that as there is no dispute at all about the Shaksperian origin of the Sonnets, he may assume this as common ground for both sides. The argument is,—the legal and other knowledge shown in the Sonnets is as great and as characteristic as that shown in the plays; but William Shakspere is admitted to be the writer of the Sonnets; therefore he wrote the plays also. It is very useful to meet with such arguments as this, because it shows us that we must keep on hammering at the very alphabet of the question for the sake of any who may be misled by the many uninstructed persons who hang about the periodical press, and who are always ready with confutations to any unpopular thesis, whether they understand it or not. For the benefit of any who may be inclined to follow these guides, it is well to repeat that the contention of the Baconians is, that William Shakspere had no hand whatever in the production of either the plays or poems—that he was an uneducated man, who could just manage to write his own name; but there is not a particle of evidence that he ever wrote or could write anything else. As to the special inference to be drawn from the very remarkable legal knowledge shown in these plays, the argument itself is derived equally from the Sonnets, and both stand on precisely the same footing. The article in *Knowledge* may therefore be incorporated into our brief, with a few modifications of phraseology, and we can refer our readers to it as a reduced epitome of the curiously facile and accurate use of law language by the writer of "Shakespeare."

The *August article* is on Bacon and Science. The writer denies the claim often made for Bacon, that he was the "father of the modern scientific method." We are more inclined to assert that he was the father of the modern scientific spirit, the spirit which demands direct investigation of nature, which has no confidence in the figments of *à priori* speculation, but follows the guidance of facts. Only in this sense did he discourage deduction, when the materials for the deductive argument are not derived from a previous induction. The marshalling of facts, so as to form steps in a reasoning process, must be according to the laws of deductive logic: and this Bacon did not deny. It must always be remembered that Bacon did not live to complete the full exposition of his philosophy, and we can only dimly surmise what the uncompleted portion would have been. It is, however, possible that Bacon's scheme for the organisation of scientific enquiry, on a large scale, regal or national in its dimensions, might have led to quite other developments of nature-study if it had been completed. It is impossible to do justice to Bacon's scientific merits without ample recognition of the fact that he was a poet, a seer, a moralist, a social and ethical philosopher, more than a man of science, as we understand the term. He was—if any one ever was—at once the prophet and the embodiment of the Renascence, and he first stirred the waters in which the modern world seeks health and healing.

The most important reference made in British periodicals to our case, is the elaborate paper occupying more than two columns of the *Daily Telegraph* of November 26, continued and completed on the 28th. A leading article also comments on the paper and on the general question. The writer of this paper indulges in a little of the usual dramatic distress—the painfully suppressed indignation at the attempt to dethrone William Shakspere —but it is quite evident that his own homage to that dumb Stratford fetish is much disturbed, and that the distress and indignation represent a sort of *octroi*, a stamp duty, or fixed fee, which must be paid in order that Bacon's claim may be admitted into the columns of a respectable journal. The editorial article is still more undisguised in its aversion to the Bacon claim as such, and says roundly that if this thesis were only supported by history, biography, criticism, and presumptive evidence, the article published that day would neither have been written nor printed. The announcement of a Cipher exercises a compulsion which unlocks doors which are shut to the most overwhelming arguments which might be produced from history, biography, and criticism. It does not matter; editors may profess

themselves deaf and blind to reason, and only accessible to affidavits, but we know quite well that the Baconian theory has only to be generally understood in order to be generally accepted, and exceptionally rejected. We need not follow the writer in his admirable *precis* of the case. It cannot but be strong, for it is a simple, unembellished account of the outline of the case against William Shakspere; which is so irresistible, that we may safely accept every one of the facts and documents so industriously accumulated by Mr. Halliwell-Phillipps as the most valuable outposts of the Baconian camp. The result of these papers in the *Daily Telegraph* will be to open our case, and bring the boycotting action of the press to a speedy close.

The *Daily Telegraph* has continued this discussion daily up to the time of our going to press. We cannot say that we are impressed by the strength of the Shaksperian arguments. One correspondent finds a conclusive proof that William Shakspere wrote both Sonnets and Plays, in the lines at the end of Sonnet 136:—

> "Make but my name thy love, and love that still,
> And then thou lov'st me, for my name is *Will*."

Many of the letters dwell on the supposed Warwickshire provincialism of Shakespeare; others, on the allusions to localities and persons belonging to the neighbourhood of Stratford-on-Avon; others call up Ben Jonson, and a shadowy crowd of contemporary witnesses, whom they are, as a rule, careful not to quote. We hope to deal with some of these difficulties and objections in an early number.

We find that the discussion has spread to all parts of the country. Most of the newspaper editors are hostile to Bacon; evidently knowing nothing whatever about him. We hear, from private sources, of lively discussions in country houses, and all sorts of social gatherings; and wherever there is no professional critic or Academic Dictator present, the balance of favour is generally given to Bacon.

A recent utterance by Canon Liddon, seems to us remarkably appropriate, with reference to much of this discussion:—"Our experience shows us, that when the human will is strongly disposed to ignore the practical consequences of a fact, it has a subtle and almost unlimited power of blinding the intellect to the most elementary laws of evidence."

SHAKESPEARE'S *HAMLET* AND BACON'S *ADVANCEMENT OF LEARNING.*

A DISCUSSION of the theory that Bacon wrote the Shakespeare drama would involve a re-statement of what is known of the life of Shakspere. All that need now be done is to refer to the hundred padded biographies in which the biographers have only succeeded in demonstrating that there was nothing about the man worth knowing. For an unpadded biography, I refer the curious to "Bacon and Shakspere," by William Henry Smith (London, 1857, chapter 2nd). Judge Holmes's *Authorship of Shakespeare*, and Appleton Morgan's *Shakespeare Myth*, give all that is known of the Stratford malt manufacturer, and show how hopeless a task it is to attempt to make a silk purse of that sow's ear.

The argument requires, too, a review of the life of Bacon. The fact should be shown that he was cotemporary with the production of the plays; that he was learned in the law; that he had studied medicine, as he says, in a letter in 1624: "You may think me partial to Potecaries that have been puddering in physic all my life." (Life, Vol. vii., page 515). It should be shown that he was learned in the "Wisdom of the ancients;" in fact, that he had "taken all knowledge for his province;" that the incidents of his personal history correspond in a hundred ways with the production and characteristics of the plays. I know of nothing better in this line than the two pamphlets of Mrs. Henry Pott, entitled, "*Did Francis Bacon Write Shakespeare"?* There are many hints scattered through his correspondence that point to his having been engaged in some literary work which he did not acknowledge. I can only mention one or two. His request to Davies, to be "good to concealed poets," is one. Toby Matthews' famous postscript is another. One sentence, in what Spedding calls Bacon's Prayer or Psalm, reads as follows: "I have (though in a despised weed) procured the good of all men." What "despised weed" is this in which Bacon has procured the good of all men? It

cannot refer to the law, or philosophy, or history, or his long service in Parliament, or on the bench. The Shakespearians are wise people in their own conceit. They have much to say of paradoxes and the "Bacon craze." It would be interesting if one of these Shakesperian illuminati would uproot this "despised weed" and give us some light on its natural history. The following lines, from the 76th Sonnet, are very well worth reading in this connection; they also equally require interpretation for the "weed":—

> "Why write I still all one, ever the same,
> And keep invention in a noted weed,
> That every word doth almost tell my name,
> Showing their birth and whence they did proceed?"

It would seem from this that this weed was a sort of anonymous "invention," and that he feared the weed might not prove a sufficient disguise. What had William Shakspere to conceal? What difference did it make to him if every word did tell his name? Was not that exactly what he wanted?

There is another kind of evidence to be considered—namely, the parallels which exist between the works of Bacon and the plays—parallels of thought and expression. Mr. Smith has given some of these parallels. Judge Holmes has given more, but the great store-house is Mrs. Pott's edition of the *Promus*.

Touching the probative force of these parallels, Senator Davis, in "*The Law in Shakespeare*," quotes the following "from an eminent text-writer on the law of evidence." "The probability derived from the concurrence of a number of independent probabilities increases not in a merely cumulative, but in a compound and multiplied, proportion." Senator Davis says: "Some of the quotations, taken alone, are doubtless of trifling probative force. They are given because, in cumulative testimony, each independent fact is a multiplier." I propose to compare some passages in *Hamlet* with others in the prose works (mostly in the *Advancement of Learning*), which, it seems to me, are identical in thought and similar in expression.

No. I.—"O, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw, and resolve itself into a dew!
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter!"
—*Hamlet*, Act. I., sc. ii., l. 229.

Flesh may be burned up, but not melted. Heat would resolve the fluids of the body into vapour, but the use of the word *melt* in this connection, it seems to me, is inexplicable without an appeal to the works of Bacon. If Hamlet's flesh would melt and resolve itself into a dew, then his spirit would go free. Or, if suicide were lawful, self-slaughter would answer the same purpose.

Now see Bacon's *History of Life and Death* (*Works*, Vol. v., page 321): "The emission of the spirit produces dryness; the detention and working thereof within the body either melts, or putrefies, or vivifies." In page 322 we read, "Melting is the work of the spirits alone, and that only when they are excited by heat; for then the spirits expanding themselves, and yet not going forth, insinuate and spread themselves among the grosser parts, and make them soft and molten, as appears in metals and wax; for metals and other tenacious bodies are apt to restrain the spirit, and prevent it from rushing forth when excited." (See Rule xv., page 328). "The spirit in a body of firm texture is detained, though against its will." Page 328: "And hence we see that metals and stone require a long time for their spirit to go forth, unless either the spirit be excited by fire, or the grosser parts be disunited by strong and corrosive waters. The like reason holds good of tenacious bodies as gums, except that they are dissolved by a gentler heat. Accordingly hard juices of the body, a tight skin, and the like are good for longevity, because they closely confine the spirit and prevent its emission." If Bacon wrote this play, it is easy to see why he made Hamlet exclaim,—

"Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would melt,
Or that the Everlasting had not fixed
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter."

No. II.—In the dead vast and middle of the night, Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus are huddled together on the platform

at Elsinore, shivering in the "nipping and eager air," while they are waiting for the coming of the ghost. The trumpet within attracts their attention, and Hamlet denounces the midnight revel of the king, and condemns the intemperance of the nation. He then proceeds:—

> "So, oft it chances in particular men,
> That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
> As, in their birth—wherein they are not guilty,
> Since nature cannot choose his origin—
> By their o'ergrowth of some complexion,
> Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason;
> Or by some habit, that too much o'er-leavens
> The form of plausive manners; that these men,
> Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
> Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
> Their virtues else—be they as pure as grace,
> As infinite as man may undergo—
> Shall in the general censure take corruption
> From that particular fault: the dram of ev'l
> Doth all the noble substance often dout
> To his own scandal."—Act. I., sc. iv., l. 17—38.

Hamlet mentions those things that in the judgment of ordinary people will cause the virtues of these men "to take corruption." First, "some vicious mole of nature," which is mentioned again in line 31 as "the stamp of one defect." This mole, or stamp, is further explained as the o'ergrowth of some complexion, or "some habit that too much o'er-leavens the form of plausive manners;" and in line 32 the faults are recapitulated as "nature's livery, or fortune's star." Clarendon says (Dr. Furness's Variorum Edition), in a note on this line, that this describes "a defect which is either natural or accidental." It would seem that Hamlet was discussing the effect that "fortunes" and "manners" work on the reputation of men.

Bacon discusses the same question in the *Advancement of Learning* (*Works*, Vol. iii., page 274): "Now, therefore, we come to that third sort of discredit, or diminution of credit, that groweth unto learning from learned men themselves which commonly cleaveth fastest. It is either from their fortune, or from their manners, or from the nature of their studies. For the first, it is not in their power; and the second is accidental;

the third only is proper to be handled. But because we are not in hand with true measure, but with popular estimation and conceit (Hamlet calls it "general censure"), it is not amiss to speak somewhat of the two former." Then Bacon goes on for nearly three pages discussing the derogations which grow to learning from the fortune or condition of learned men. On p. 277, he says: "As touching the manners of learned men, it is a thing personal and individual; and no doubt there be amongst them, as in other professions, of all temperatures." Bacon continues the discussion of the manners of learned men for four pages, and concludes as follows, page 280: "There is yet another fault (with which I will conclude this part) which is often noted in learned men, that they do many times fail to observe decency and discretion in their behaviour and carriage, and commit errors in small and ordinary points of action; so as the vulgar sort of capacities do make a judgment of them in greater matters by that which they find wanting in them in smaller."

Hamlet says:—

"These men,
Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
Their virtues * * *
Shall in the general censure take corruption
From that particular fault—the dram of ev'l
Doth all the noble substance often dout
To his own scandal."

Bacon discusses Fortune—Hamlet Fortune's star. Bacon discusses Manners. Hamlet speaks of "a habit that o'erleavens the form of plausive manners." Bacon says there is yet another fault; Hamlet says, "from that particular fault." Bacon says, the vulgar sort of capacities do make a judgment; Hamlet says, "In the general censure," and "censure" in Shakespeare means judgment. Bacon says, "Make a judgment of them in greater matters by that which they lack in smaller." Hamlet says, "The dram of evil throws a doubt over, or obliterates (the reading is doubtful, though the sense is clear) all the noble substance." It seems to me that these two nuggets were dug from the same mine.

No. III.—Bacon says of the ancients and their methods of teaching by allegory, "For the inventions and conclusions of the human reason (even those that are now common and trite) being then new and strange, the minds of men were hardly subtle enough to conceive them, unless they were brought nearer to the sense by this kind of resemblances and examples." (*Works* Vol. vi., page 698). The theatre furnished him means by which abstract truths could be taught by object lessons that the dullest must have been able to comprehend. Here is an example. The bare proposition is found in the *Advancement of Learning* (Vol. iii., page 279): "For the honest and just bounds of observation by one person upon another extend no farther than to understand him sufficiently, whereby not to give him offence, or whereby to be able to give him faithful counsel, or whereby to stand upon reasonable guard and caution in respect of a man's self; but to be speculative into another man, to the end to know how to work him, or wind him, or govern him, proceedeth from a heart that is double and cloven, and not entire and ingenuous, which, as in friendship it is want of integrity, so towards princes or superiors is want of duty."

The object lesson can be found in *Hamlet*, Act. III., sc. ii.:—

Ham. . . why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil?

Guil. O, my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly.

Ham. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe?

Guil. My lord, I cannot.

Ham. I do beseech you.

Guil. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Ham. 'Tis as easy as lying; govern these ventages with your fingers and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most excellent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guil. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony; I have not the skill.

Ham. Why look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me! You would play upon me; you would seem to know my stops; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery; you would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my compass; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ; yet cannot you make it speak. S'blood! do you think that I am easier to be played on than a pipe? Call me what instrument you will, though you can fret me, you can not play upon me.

Bacon says this attempt to work or govern another man, proceeds from a heart that is double and cloven; that in friendship it is want of integrity, and towards superiors a want of duty. It is well to note how exactly this description fits the character of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and Hamlet's judgment of them.

No. IV.—In the *Advancement of Learning* (*Works*, Vol. iii., p. 280), Bacon says he has "no purpose to give allowance to some conditions and courses, base and unworthy, wherein divers professors of learning have wronged themselves and gone too far.". He calls them "trencher philosophers," and adds: "But above all the rest, the gross and palpable * flattery whereunto many (not unlearned) have abased and abused their wits and pens, turning (as Du Bartas saith) Hecuba into Helena, and Faustina into Lucretia, hath most diminished the price and estimation of learning."

Polonius was something of a philosopher, and very much of a courtier. In his obsequiousness he turned a camel into a weasel, and a weasel into a whale.

Ham. Do you see that cloud, that's almost in shape like a camel?
Pol. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.
Ham. Methinks it is like a weasel.
Pol. It is backed like a weasel.
Ham. Or like a whale?
Pol. Very like a whale.—(Act III., sc. ii., l. 359).

That waterfly Osric blew hot and cold at the dictation of his master in a way that was refreshing. (See Act V., sc. ii., l. 93.)

Ham. Put your bonnet to his right use; 'tis for the head.
Osr. I thank your lordship; 'tis very hot.
Ham. No; believe me, 'tis very cold; the wind is northerly.
Osr. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed.
Ham. Methinks it is very sultry and hot, for my complection.
Osr. Exceedingly, my lord; it is very sultry, . . . as 'twere . . . I can not tell how.

No. V.—On the next page (p. 281) of the *Advancement* Bacon discusses another sort of application of learned men to

* See "Bacon Journal," No. iv., p. 150.

men of wealth, and this he seems to regard with a qualified approval. I quote, "Not that I tax or condemn the morigeration or application of learned men to men in fortune;"* and after giving some examples he adds: "These and the like applications, and stooping to points of necessity and convenience, cannot be disallowed; for though they may have some outward baseness, yet in a judgment truly made they are to be accounted submissions to the occasion, and not to the person." Hamlet seemed to entertain the same opinion with regard to this stooping and morigeration.

Ham. Nay, do not think I flatter;
For what advancement may I hope from thee,
That no revenue hast but thy good spirits,
To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flatter'd?
No, let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
Where thrift may follow fawning.—(Act III., sc. ii., l. 52.)

No. VI.—On the next page of the *Advancement* (p. 282) Bacon has much to say of the style of writing and speaking which prevailed at the time of Martin Luther and later. I quote from p. 283:—"So that these four causes concurring, the admiration of ancient authors, the hate of the school men, the exact study of languages, and the efficacy of preaching, did bring in an affectionate study of eloquence and copie of speech, which then began to flourish. This grew speedily to an excess; for men began to hunt more after words than matter; and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures, than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment." Polonius makes a speech that answers this description exactly. It contains fifteen or twenty lines, and the only matter in the speech is conveyed in four words. Polonius' speech is an example of what Bacon calls "the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter."

* "The learned pate ducks to the golden fool."—*Timon of Athens.*

Pol. Since brevity is the soul of wit,
And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
I will be brief. Your noble son is mad;
Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
What is 't but to be nothing else but mad?
But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art.

Pol. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true, 'tis pity,
And pity 'tis, 'tis true: a foolish figure:
But farewell it, for I will use no art.
Mad let us grant him then; and now remains
That we find out the cause of this effect;
Or rather, say the cause of this defect;
For this effect, defective, comes by cause.
Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
—(Act II., sc. ii., l. 90).

Pol. What do you read, my lord?

Ham. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between whom?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.—*Ib.* l. 191.

This first disease of learning that Bacon describes must have been running in the mind of the Queen and of Hamlet.

No. VII.—On page 285 Bacon says: "The second disease of learning which followeth is in nature worse than the former; for as substance of matter is better than beauty of words, so contrariwise vain matter is worse than vain words." He then quotes from St. Paul, and goes on: "Surely, like as many substances in nature which are solid, do putrefy and corrupt into worms, so it is the property of good and sound knowledge to putrefy and dissolve into a number of subtle, idle, unwholesome, and (as I may term them) vermiculate questions, which have indeed a quickness and life of spirit, but no soundness of matter or goodness of quality." . . . "For the wit and mind of man, if it work upon matter, which is the contemplation of the creatures of God, worketh according to the stuff, and is limited thereby; but if it work upon itself, as the spider worketh his web, then it is endless, and brings forth indeed cobwebs of learning, admirable for the fineness of thread and work, but of no substance or profit."

"This same unprofitable subtlety or curiosity is of two sorts: either in the subject itself that they handle, when it is a fruitless speculation or controversy (whereof there are no small number, both in divinity and philosophy), or in the manner or method of handling a knowledge. . . . And such is their method, that rests not so much upon evidence of truth proved by arguments, authorities, similitudes, examples, as upon particular confutations and solutions of every scruple, cavillation, and objection; breeding for the most part one question as fast as it solveth another. . . . The generalities of the schoolmen are for a while good and proportionable: but then when you descend into their distinctions and decisions, instead of a fruitful womb for the use and benefit of man's life, they end in monstrous altercations and barking questions."

Now turn we to the famous soliloquy, "To be or not to be." Bacon characterises this second disease of learning as vain matter and fruitless speculations. I think everybody will agree that the question whether a man should be, or not be, is one that he should never ask himself. A practical man would say, *I am*, and that ends it. Every man should have "business and desire," and to be brooding over a question of this sort is a fruitless speculation, and a vain matter.

Bacon says, in the second place, it is the property of knowledge to dissolve into unwholesome and vermiculate questions without soundness of matter or goodness of quality. Hamlet's question dissolved itself in this manner: one springing up after another before he could get the first one answered. To be or not to be?—is death a sleep?—is the sleep of death disturbed by dreams? and so on,—all unwholesome questions, "without soundness of matter, or goodness of quality."

Bacon says, in the third place, if the mind of man works upon itself as the spider, it brings forth cobwebs of learning of no substance or profit. Hamlet's mind was working upon itself in this way, and this is his own judgment on this cobweb of learning. His own conclusion is that the fabric woven in this loom is not only of no substance or profit, but is absolutely

ruinous. He says, "And thus," *i.e.*, by the contemplation of questions like this,—

> "And thus the native hue of resolution
> Is sickled o'er with the pale cast of thought,
> And enterprises of great pith and moment
> With this regard, their currents turn away,
> And lose the name of action."—(Act III., sc. i., 84).

Everybody will admit that Hamlet's speculations were fruitless, unprofitable, and pernicious to him, and, as Bacon says, "breeding for the most part one question as fast as they solved another."

It will be noticed that it is "the pale cast of thought" that works the mischief. It is reflection on this vain and unprofitable subject that puzzles the will; that fades out the fiery hue of resolution with the pale cast of thought, and makes a man powerless to accomplish his purpose. Hamlet repeats this in Act IV., sc. iv., l. 33—67. Here is a speech of 34 lines, and every word in that speech is for the purpose of showing that the contemplation of a vain and unprofitable subject is, in Hamlet's opinion, the reason why he has thus far failed to accomplish the purpose of his life. Notice this speech carefully. Hamlet says, first—If a man spends his time for the purpose of being able to sleep and feed, he is no more than a beast.

Second—God gave us "this large discourse, looking before and after, this capability and God-like reason," that we might use it. Now notice Hamlet's

Third point—I have been using this power to think—I have been availing myself of this reasoning faculty, and nothing has come of it.

> "Now, whether it be
> Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple
> Of thinking too precisely on the event,—
> A thought which, quartered, hath but one part wisdom,
> And ever three parts coward,—I do not know
> Why yet I live to say, 'This thing's to do,'
> Sith I have cause, and will, and strength, and means
> To do 't." (Act IV. sc. iv., l. 39).

It was the barren and unprofitable subject of his contempla-

tions that led to this fruitless result. He then calls to mind the army of Fortinbras, where he saw

> "The imminent death of twenty thousand men,
> That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
> Go to their graves like beds."

Then he mentions those things which should excite his reason and his blood to vengeance, and concludes as follows:—

> "O, from this time forth,
> My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth!"

Now, from the beginning to the end of that speech Hamlet finds fault with the channel in which his thoughts have been running—with the vain matter which he had been studying, and says it is on account of the subject of his contemplation that he is still forced to say, "This thing's to do." His conclusion is that he will change the nature of his thoughts—that he will force his mind into a new channel.

Perhaps the introduction to Polonius' speech before quoted is aimed at such vain and unprofitable discussions as are now under consideration.

> *Pol.* My liege, and madam, to expostulate
> What majesty should be, what duty is,
> Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
> Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
> (Act II., sc. ii., l. 88).

An investigation of even these questions ought to result as favourably, "for the use and benefit of man's life," as the question that Hamlet propounded.

> *Ham.* To what base uses we may return, Horatio! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole?
> *Hor.* 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.
> (Act V., sc. i., l. 192.)

Bacon remarks: "This same unprofitable subtlety or curiosity is of two sorts; either in the subject they handle, or in the manner of handling it" (p. 286).

According to Bacon, Hamlet seems to have been unfortunate in the selection of his subjects. I find the following comments on line 60 of the soliloquy in Dr. Furness's Variorum Edition:—*Douce*: "There is a good deal on this subject in Cardanus's

'Comfort,' a book which Shakespeare had certainly read." *Hunter*: "This seems to be the book which Shakespeare placed in the hands of Hamlet, and the following passages, . . we cannot doubt, were in Shakespeare's mind when he put this speech into the mouth of Hamlet. 'Seeing, therefore, with such ease men die, what should we account of death to be resembled to anything better than sleep? Sleeps are most sweet as be most sound, for those are the best wherein like unto dead men we dream nothing.'" I cannot pretend to say what Shakspere had read, or whether he had ever read anything; but that Bacon had read Cardan there is no question. He refers to that author on the page following his discussion of the schoolmen (126), and quotes him" (L. & L., Vol. vi., p. 102).

No. VIII.—On page 380 of the *Advancement* Bacon discusses *Divination*, and says it is "of two sorts—*primitive*, and by *influxion*. *Primitive* is grounded upon the supposition that the mind, when it is withdrawn and collected into itself, and not diffused into the organs of the body, hath some extent and latitude of prenotion; which, therefore, appeareth mostly in *sleep*, in *ecstacies*, and *near death;* and more rarely in *waking apprehensions;* and is induced and furthered by those abstinences and observances which make the mind most to consist in itself. *By influxion*, is grounded upon the conceit that the mind, as a mirror or glass, should take illumination from the foreknowledge of God and spirits; unto which the same regiment doth likewise conduce." Here are five points noted, and they are all found in Hamlet.

1. Ecstasy.

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain;
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.
(Act III., sc. iv., l. 137).

2. Prenotion.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio! the funeral baked meats
Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.
Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven
Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio!
My father,—Methinks I see my father.

Hor. O where, my lord?
Ham. *In my mind's eye,* Horatio.*
(Act I., sc. ii., l. 190.)
Ham. I see a cherub that sees them.†—(Act IV., sc. iii., l. 47.)

3. Sleep.

Ham. O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell,‡ and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams.
(Act II., sc. ii., l. 249.)

Malone reads, "I have *had* dreams," and Dr. Furness remarks much can be said in favour of this reading.

4. Near death.

Ham. I do not think so; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart; but it is no matter.
(Act V., sc. ii., l. 201.)

In ten minutes Hamlet was dead.

5. Prenotion in waking apprehension.

Ghost. But know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.
Ham. O my prophetic soul! My uncle?
(Act I., sc. v., l. 38.)

This is the fifth. They correspond in number and character with the five points described by Bacon.

No. IX.—Discoursing on the attractions that exist between bodies, Bacon remarks: "It is certain that all bodies whatsoever, though they have no sense, yet they have perception; for when one body is applied to another, there is a kind of election to embrace that which is agreeable, and to exclude or expel that which is ingrate." In the *De Augmentis* this is touched upon again (Vol. iv., p. 402) in these words: "A good explanation of the difference between Perception and Sense should have been prefixed by philosophers to their treatises on Sense and the Sensible, as a matter most fundamental. For we see that all natural bodies have a manifest power of perception, and also a kind of choice in receiving what is agreeable, and

* "The mind not diffused into the organs of the body."
† "Illumination from the foreknowledge of spirits."
‡ "The mind withdrawn and collected into itself."

avoiding what is hostile or foreign. Nor am I speaking only of the more subtle perceptions, as when the magnet attracts iron, flame leaps toward naptha, one bubble coming near another unites with it, rays of light start away from a white object, the body of an animal assimilates things that are useful and excerns things that are not so, part of a sponge attracts water (though held too high to touch it) and expels air, and the like." . . "Philosophers should have examined the difference between Perception and Sense, not only in sensible as compared with insensible bodies (as plants with animals), but also in the sensible body itself, they should have observed what is the reason why so many actions are performed without any sense at all; why food is digested and ejected; humors and juices carried up and down; the heart and pulse beat; the entrails, like so many workshops, perform every one its own work; and yet all these and many other things are done without sense. . . . In a word, they do not seem at all to understand the difference between simple perception and sense, nor how far perception may take place without sense. . . . For ignorance on this point drove some of the ancient philosophers to suppose that a soul was infused into all bodies without distinction; for they could not conceive how there could be motion at discretion without sense, or sense without a soul." An instance of this perception is found in Cymbeline—

> "The flame of the taper
> Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids,
> To see the enclosed lights, ..."
>
> (*Cymb.*, Act II., sc. ii., l. 18.)

Now we return to Hamlet. It must be borne in mind that Bacon is discussing the capacity implied in perception, as an attribute of all natural bodies, to make an election—to embrace that which is agreeable, and to exclude that which is ingrate. In inanimate bodies this capacity is called Perception, and in animate bodies the ability to choose is called Sense; it comes through the Senses. He concludes by saying that the old philosophers believed that wherever there was motion there was sense.

Ham. Look here, upon this picture, and on this;
The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

The Queen is called upon to make an election, "to embrace the agreeable and to expel the ingrate."

See what a grace was seated on his brow;
Hyperion's curls; the front of Jove himself;
An eye like Mars, to threaten or command;
* * * * * *
This was your husband. Look you now what follows:
Here is your husband; like a mildew'd ear,
Blasting his wholesome brother.—Have you eyes?
Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
And batten on this moor? Ha! have you eyes?
You cannot call it love; for, at your age,
The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
And waits upon the judgment; and what judgment
Would step from this to this? *Sense, sure, you have,*
Else could you not have motion.
* * * * * *
What devil was 't
That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind?
Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
Or but a sickly part of one true sense
Could not so mope.

(Act III., sc. iv., 54).

Dr. Furness quotes from Warburton, Capell, Steevens, Malone, Staunton, Clarendon, and Moberly, in a vain endeavour to explain this passage.

"Sense sure you have,
Else could you not have motion."

The statement in the *De Augmentis*, and that in *Hamlet*, touching sense and motion are contradictory. Hamlet's was made in one of the early editions of the play, and Bacon's in 1623. This passage is omitted from the 1623 edition of *Hamlet*.

No. X.—In 1603 Bacon wrote the following letter, which is docketed in these words:—

"To Mr. Robert Kempe, upon the death of Queene Elizabeth.

Mr. Kempe:

This alteration is so great, as you mought justly conceive some coldness of my affection towards you if you should hear nothing from

me, I living in this place. It is in vain to tell you with what wonderful still and calm this wheel is turned round."

(*Life*, Vol. iii., p. 74.)

Ros. The cease of majesty
Dies not alone; but, like a gulf, doth draw
What's near it with it; it is a massy wheel,
Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
Are mortised and adjoined: . . . .

(Act III., sc. iii., l. 15.)

Bacon and Rosencranz use the same figure in describing the death of "majesty."

The same idea is implied in Bacon's Letter to Villiers, telling him that, as a royal favourite, all who have business at Court will look upon him as their good angel, or at least as not a *Malus Genius* against them. He says: "This you cannot now avoid unless you will adventure a precipice, to fall down faster than you rose. Opinion is a master wheel in these cases." Here again is "a massy wheel fixed on the summit of the highest mount"—to whose spokes Buckingham was mortised and adjoined.—*Life*, Vol. vi., p. 15.

No. XI. The king is at his prayers. Hamlet is on his way to his mother when he comes upon the king. Instead of avenging the murder of the king, Hamlet makes a long speech. I quote a few of the last lines.

Ham. Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent;
When he is drunk, asleep, or in his rage,
Or in the incestuous pleasure of his bed;
At gaming, swearing, or about some act
That has no relish of salvation in't;
Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven;
And that his soul may be as damned, and black,
As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays:
This physic but prolongs thy sickly days.

—(Act. III., sc. iii., l. 88.)

Hanmer says: "This speech of Hamlet has always given me great offense." Hunter says: "In the whole range of the drama there is perhaps nothing more offensive than this scene." Johnson: "This speech is too horrible to be read or to be uttered." Hudson: "Hamlet here flies off to an ideal revenge,

in order to quiet his filial feelings without violating his conscience; effecting a compromise between them, by adjourning a purpose which, as a man he dare not execute, nor as a son, abandon."

It seems to me that the true interpretation of this speech is found in Bacon's *Essay of Anger* (*Works* vi., 511):"But in all refrainings of anger, it is the best remedy to gain time; and to make a man's self believe, that the opportunity of his revenge is not yet come, but that he foresees a time for it, and so to still himself in the meantime, and reserve it."

No. XII. In Bacon's *Advancement* we read: "For a man ought in every particular action so to carry the motions of his mind, and so have one thing under another, as if he cannot have that he seeketh in the best degree, yet to have it in a second, or so in a third."—Vol. v., p. 470.

This is repeated in *Hamlet*:—

> If this should fail,
> And that our drift look through our bad performance,
> 'Twere better not assayed. Therefore this project
> Should have a back, or second, that might hold
> If this should blast in proof.—(Act IV., sc. vii., l. 149.)

No. XIII. See *Advancement of Learning* (Vol. v., p. 408): "There hath been also laboured and put in practice a method, which is not a lawful method, but a method of imposture; which is to deliver knowledge in such manner, as men may speedily come to make a show of learning who have it not . . . . being nothing but a mass of words of all arts, to give men countenance that those which use the terms might be thought to understand the art; which collections are much like a fripper's or a broker's shop, that hath ends of everything, but nothing of worth."

This is repeated in *Hamlet*:—

> *Ham.* Thus has he (and many more of the same bevy that I know, the drossy age doats on)—only got the tune of the time, and outward habit of encounter; a kind of yesty collection, which carries them through and through the most fanned and winnowed opinions; and do but blow them to their trials, the bubbles are out.—(Act. V., sc. ii., l. 180.)

This "water-fly" seems to have been using one of the "collections" that Bacon speaks of.

In closing this paper, I desire to call attention to some remarks made in Bacon's discourse on "Prometheus, or the State of Man." See *Wisdom of the Ancients*, chap. xxvi., Vol. vi., p. 745. I can only touch on one or two points. On page 745 Bacon states that man brought an accusation against Prometheus and against Fire which he had stolen for the use and benefit of man. Bacon explains this in the following words (p.748),"The accusation and arraignment by men both of their own nature and of art, proceeds from an excellent condition of mind and issues in good; whereas the contrary is hated by the gods, and unlucky." He continues on page 751: "After touching the state of religion, the parable turns to morals and the conditions of human life."* He shows how Pandora represents pleasure and sensual appetite, and how man has suffered from the infinite mischiefs which have flowed from the pursuit of pleasure. He continues: "But it is worth while to observe how prettily and elegantly the two conditions and as it were pictures or models of human life are set forth in the story, under the persons of Prometheus and Epimetheus. The followers of Epimetheus are the improvident, who take no care for the future, but think only of what is pleasant at the time," and so on. It is the follower of Prometheus that we have in hand now. I quote again: "The school of Prometheus, on the other hand, that is the wise and fore-thoughtful class of men, do indeed by their caution decline and remove out of their way many evils and misfortunes; but with that good there is this evil joined, that they stint themselves of many pleasures and of the various agreeableness of life, and cross their genius, and (what is far worse) torment and wear themselves away with cares and solicitude and inward fears." How exactly this describes the mental condition of Hamlet! "For being bound to the column of Necessity, they are troubled with innumerable thoughts (which because of their flightiness are represented by the eagle), thoughts which prick, and gnaw, and corrode the liver; and if at intervals, as in the night, they obtain some little relaxation and quiet of mind, yet new fears and anxieties return presently with the morning."

* See "Shakespeare as an Artist," by Henry J. Ruggles, Riverside Press, 1870

The Ghost had bound Hamlet to the column of Necessity. Filial duty demanded that he should avenge the murder of his father, and his conscience warned him that he should do no murder, so that he tormented and wore himself away with solicitude and fears.

Bacon continues: "Very few, therefore, are they to whom the benefit of both portions falls,—to retain the advantages of providence and yet free themselves from the evils of solicitude and perturbation. Neither is it possible for anyone to attain this double blessing, except by the help of Hercules; that is, fortitude and constancy of mind, which being prepared for all events and equal to any fortune, foresees without fear, enjoys without fastidiousness, and bears without impatience." It is easy to recognise this portrait.

Ham. Thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing;
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Has ta'en with equal thanks; and blest are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well commingled
That they are not a pipe for Fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please.
—(Act. III., sc. ii., l. 60.)

Hamlet belongs to the school of Prometheus, while Horatio is one of the fortunate ones to whom the benefit of both portions belongs. There is one point more. Bacon now returns to the crime with which Prometheus was charged; that is, the attempt upon the chastity of Minerva. I quote: "The crime alluded to appears to be no other than that into which men not unfrequently fall when puffed up with arts and much knowledge, of trying to bring the divine wisdom itself under the dominion of sense and reason; from which attempt inevitably follows laceration of the mind and vexation without end or rest."

I take it that this was the extent of Hamlet's insanity. He is full of scepticism. He has mixed his divinity and his philosophy—his science and his religion. He forgets that a man should do his duty and leave the consequences to the power which overrules the destiny of man. He has turned a

question of casuistry over to the intellect, and as Bacon says, the result has been laceration of mind without end or rest.

Mr. James Russell Lowell said of the old English dramatists, in a lecture delivered in Boston last March: "Three or four of them were men of genius, though the greatest of them was immeasurably below the apparition known to moderns as Shakespeare." Apparition indeed! The world is tired of the apparition. The Baconians are clothing that spectre with flesh and blood. They are giving it the glow and warmth of life. Now we have found the man, we can dispense with the phantom. We know the date of his birth and death. We know all about his boyhood and the achievements of his maturer years. We know of his successes and his disappointments. We know that fortune smiled on him at times, and we know there was a time when his spirit was palled in gloom as black as death.

As Paulina pulled aside the curtain, and the living, breathing Hermione stepped down to greet her friends, so Francis Bacon steps out from the shadow of almost three hundred years, and is recognised as the high priest of Nature that produced the natural history of the hopes and fears, of the virtues and crimes, of the ambition, cunning, and cowardice of humanity, which has been called the drama of Shakespeare.

H. L. Moore.

Lawrence, Kansas, June 1st, 1887.

NOTES.

Bacon's conception of Hamlet seems dimly anticipated in his description of the "disgraces," or imputations, "which learning receiveth from politiques," or men of action:—

"That learning doth soften men's minds and makes them more unapt for the honour and exercise of arms; that it doth mar and pervert men's dispositions for matter of government or policy, in making them too curious and irresolute by variety of reading; . . . or it doth divert men's travails from action and business, and bringeth them to a love of leisure and privateness."

Bacon's reply to these imputations is that for all these "indispositions and infirmities," learning supplies "medicines and remedies."

"For if by a secret operation it make men perplexed and irresolute, on the other side, by plain precept it teaches them when and upon what ground to resolve. . . . And these medicines it conveyeth into men's minds much more forcibly by the quickness and penetration of examples. For let a man look into the errors of Clement the Seventh, so lively described by Guicciardini, who served under him, or into the errors of Cicero, painted out by his own pencil in his Epistles to Atticus, and he will fly apace from being irresolute."

The passage in Guicciardini to which Bacon refers is as follows:—

"And in deliberating for himself, and in performing that which he had deliberated, every little consideration which newly presented itself, every slight impediment which came across his path, seemed sufficient to cause him to return to that state of confusion in which he had been, before debating at all."

It must not be supposed that the specimens of correspondence between *Hamlet* and Bacon's prose, given by Colonel Moore, by any means exhaust the collection that might be made. Colonel Moore restricts himself almost entirely to the parallelisms to be derived from the *Advancement*. If he had travelled further, and brought the whole of Bacon's prose works into requisition, he might have multiplied his instances indefinitely. We may give one or two specimens. We find from a letter of Bacon's to the King that Hamlet's sentiment—

> "Rashly,
> And praised be rashness for it: let us know
> Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
> When our dear plots do pall; and that should teach us
> There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
> Rough-hew them how we will"—

is derived from the Latin poet Martial. Bacon writes thus:—"Your Majesty hath put upon me a work of Providence. . . which is to break and distinguish future events into present cases. . . that things duly foreseen may have their remedies and directions in readiness. Wherein I cannot forget what the poet Martial saith, '*O quantum est casibus ingenium*,' (which may be freely translated 'Oh, what divinity there is in chance'!) signifying that accident is many times more subtle than foresight, and over reacheth expectation."—*Life*, Vol. v., p. 276.

In reference to the second section of Colonel Moore's paper, p. 177, we may venture upon the following expansion. The sentiment which Hamlet expresses in the passage quoted, that in some particular men,—by which he probably means great, or conspicuous men, — some "vicious mole," or "some habit which o'er-leavens the form of plausive manners," makes all their virtues corrupt, and casts a scandal of doubt over all their noble substance, is still more closely reflected in the eighth book of the *De Augmentis*, where we have Bacon's Comment on the Proverb, "As dead flies do cause the best ointment to stink, so does a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour." This is the homily which he derives from the proverb:—

"It is a very hard and unhappy condition (as the proverb well remarks) of men pre-eminent for virtue, that their errors, be they never so trifling, are never excused. But, as in the clearest diamond, every little cloud or speck catches and displeases the eye, which in a less perfect stone would hardly be discerned, so in men of remarkable virtue the slightest faults are seen, talked of, and severely censured, which in ordinary men would either be entirely unobserved, or readily excused. Hence a little folly in a very wise man, a very small offence in a very good man, a slight impropriety in a man of polite and elegant manners, detracts greatly from their character and reputation; and, therefore, it would be no bad policy for eminent men to mingle some harmless absurdities with their actions, so that they may retain some liberty for themselves, and make small defects less distinguishable."—*Works*, Vol. v., p. 42.

It is obvious to remark what a conspicuous example Bacon himself is of the truth of these remarks. And we may add it is really difficult to suppose that the author of *Hamlet* and the writer of this meditation are different persons.

This is a favourite sentiment, both of Bacon and Shakespeare. See *Promus*, 89. Much the same sentiment is expressed in 1 *Henry IV.*, III., i. 179, where Mortimer gives to Hotspur this counsel:—

"You must needs learn, lord, to amend this fault:
Though sometimes it shows greatness, courage, blood,—
And that's the dearest grace it renders you,—
Yet oftentimes it doth present harsh rage,
Defect of manners, want of government,
Pride, haughtiness, opinion, and disdain:
The least of which, haunting a nobleman,
Loseth men's hearts; and leaves behind a stain
Upon the beauty of all parts besides,
Beguiling them of commendation."

"I CANNOT TELL."

In the opening paragraph of Bacon's "*Essay of Truth*,"—the first in the immortal volume—a curious and interesting problem is suggested. It is derived professedly from one of the later Greek writers, who "is at a stand to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant, but for the lie's sake;" or, as he had before described it, for "a natural, though corrupt, love of the lie itself." This is the puzzle, and he himself professes to be "at a stand" as he confronts it, for he appears as if he would give it up. "But *I cannot tell*," he exclaims, and yet he does not quite mean what he says; in fact, he himself shows a little poetic love of the lie which makes for pleasure, for "*I cannot tell*" is scarcely sincere, inasmuch as he proceeds at once to give a very beautiful and poetical solution of the puzzle which he has started: "This same truth is a naked and open daylight that doth not show the masques, and mummeries, and triumphs, of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights." So, then, the collapse of judgment which seems to be indicated by the phrase, "*I cannot tell*," is only assumed. It is a poetic lie—what he calls a counterfeit, which gives a more dainty aroma to the fanciful explanation that follows.

Now on looking rather more closely at this little dramatic exhibition of affected embarrassment, we find that this same formula is used habitually, and with an almost technical restriction to cases of this kind—*i.e.*, when the puzzle suggested does not imply any real arrest of judgment, and when the solution offered is fanciful, fantastic, sportive, or sometimes scornful.

This use of the expression is, however, very colloquial, and we must not look for many instances of it in Bacon-proper, where the statesman, the philosopher, usually speaks, not the lively controversialist, with quips, and jests, and counterfeits, and stage devices. In his speeches and letters, however, Bacon sometimes becomes colloquial, and then occasionally this formula of affected perplexity crops up. Thus, in his speech for

general naturalisation, he discourses on the strength to be derived by union with Scotland, in the increased security against the hostile designs of France and Spain. As to Spain, indeed, he combats with a noble disdain the idea that England, whose strength consists in its iron, *i.e.*, in the valour of her sons, should fear a nation like Spain, because it has become rich by plunder—a country which has often been subjected to conquerors, to Carthage, to Rome, to the Saracens, to the Goths; and, therefore, he proceeds:—

"If I shall speak unto you mine own heart, methinks we should a little disdain that the nation of Spain. . . should dream of a monarchy in the West. . . only because they have ravished from some wild and unarmed people mines and store of gold; and, on the other hand, that this Isle of Brittany, seated and manned as it is, and that hath (I make no question), the best iron in the world—that is, the best soldiers of the world, should think of nothing but reckonings, and audits, and *meum*, and *tuum*, and *I cannot tell what*."—*Life*, iii., 324.

Here is the same mental attitude as that of the Essay of Truth. He is *at a stand* why Englishmen should be thinking about such frivolities as "reckonings, and audits, and *meum* and *tuum*, and *I cannot tell* what." He *has* told;—his perplexity is rhetorical only; intellectually it is a pretence, a poetic lie, which gives point to the scorn which his catalogue expresses.

There is another instance in the charge touching duels. In a passage which recalls the satire on quarrels in *As You Like It*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, he refers with scorn to the niceties of analysis by which the Duelling Code was regulated:—

"But I say the compounding of quarrels, which is otherwise used by private noblemen and gentlemen, it is so punctual—[*i.e.*, full of punctilios], and hath such reference and respect unto received conceits—what's before-hand, and what's behind-hand, and *I cannot tell what*, as, without all question, it doth in a fashion countenance and authorize this practice of duels, as if it had in it something of right."—*Life*, iv., 402.

Here the grotesque element is obvious. It gives opportunity for being "at a stand," a pretended mental bewilderment, with its characteristic formula, *I cannot tell*. Again we see his embarrassment is only rhetorical; it is indignation in masquerade.

There is a similar case in a letter addressed to the king, in reference to the petition made by a company of cloth merchants, who wished for some modification of the contract or conditions under which they enjoyed their privileges and monopoly. The language is too technical to be entirely intelligible to those who do not understand the usages of the trade or of the time. These merchants had promised all sorts of advantages to the trade of the country, and Bacon says:—

"They would have brought in lawful and settled trades, full manufactures, merchandise of all natures, poll-money, or brotherhood-money, and *I cannot tell what.*"—*Life*, v., 258.

Bacon is very contemptuous to these shifty traders, and runs through a catalogue of their unfulfilled promises, which he cuts short with an *I cannot tell what*—a dramatic pretence of perplexity to give pungency to his scorn.

In Bacon's speech on taking his seat as Lord Chancellor, he announces his intention of adopting certain rules in the conduct of his office. One of these refers to the case of suitors, who came before the court after having had an adverse judgment in common law. This had recently been the cause of a great controversy, in which Lord Chief Justice Coke, wishing to make the decisions of his own court final, threatened a *præmunire* process and other penalties, even to the officers of the court who might be concerned in forwarding these cases of appeal. Bacon refers to this with some scorn as a matter, "Wherein your lordships may have heard a great rattle, and a noise of *præmunire*, and *I cannot tell* what." (*Life* vi., 185).

The use of the phrase corresponds exactly to the other cases which I have referred to. There is a disdainful, rhetorical pretence of not knowing what he only desires to ignore. It is not that he *does* not know or *cannot tell*, but he *will* not know, and he *will* not tell.

These are all the instances of the use of this idiomatic phrase that I have yet found in Bacon-proper. In "Shakespeare," however, there are many specimens, and it will be found that whenever the words occur elliptically, detached, not worked up into the currency of a sentence—for then they have no special significance—they almost always express this sort of *Heigh-ho*!

Well-a-day! half-sighing, half-mocking state of assumed mental perplexity, which we see they always express in the prose works. Always the speaker is *at a stand*, and the phrase is a rhetorical device.

For the first instance, take one in the play of *Richard III.* Richard, as Duke of Gloster, is challenged by the Queen of Edward IV. to explain his bitter hatred of herself and her family. He replies, *I cannot tell*, but he proceeds to explain, nevertheless, and his explanation is so fantastic and extravagant that it adds to the force of his assumed perplexity.

> *I cannot tell.* The world is grown so bad
> That wrens make prey, where eagles dare not perch;
> Since every Jack became a gentleman,
> There's many a gentle person made a Jack.
> —*Rich. II.*, Act I., sc. iii., l. 70.

In a similarly assumed vein of moral perplexity, Falstaff replies to the reproach of the Lord Chief Justice in the smart passage of word-fence between these two excellent wits in 2 *Henry IV.*, I., ii. The Chief Justice says:—

"You follow the young prince up and down, like his evil angel."

The wicked old jester pretends that his lordship refers to the coin called an angel, and replies—

"Not so, my lord. Your ill angel is light, but I hope he that looks upon me will take me without weighing. And yet, in some respects, I grant, I cannot go"—

that is, I cannot pass current as a coin of good weight; but then he drifts off, by a mocking profession of inability to find out why his good qualities are not properly valued:—

"*I cannot tell.* Virtue is of so little regard in these costermonger times that true valour is turned bear-herd. Pregnancy [great intellectual capacity] is made a tapster, and hath his quick wit wasted in giving reckonings."

He humorously professes himself unable to say why virtue, such as his, should be used as a bear-herd to take charge of such a young cub as the prince, and his great abilities employed in looking after the prince's expenditure at ale houses. In this case, a reference to the almost technical meaning of *I cannot*

tell, elucidates the significance of the passage, which is sometimes mistaken. For Rev. John Hunter explains the phrase as if it referred still to the angel-coin, and paraphrases it thus:—"I cannot pass; I cannot pass in counting." But Falstaff has already sufficiently expressed this by saying, "In some respects I grant, *I cannot go*." There is no need to credit either Falstaff or the poet with tautology, for Falstaff is one of the keenest intellects Shakespeare ever drew. *I cannot tell* is evidently here also the formula of an assumed "*stand*," a preparation for the new and grotesque solution of the fantastical problem which immediately follows. But it is a piece of fooling throughout—a poetic lie, and, as in most (not all) cases, the formula of assumed perplexity precedes the mock solution.

Another case is to be found in Nym's speech referring to Falstaff's marriage with Dame Quickly. Nym is jilted, for he intended to marry the dame himself; and he vows, in melodramatic innuendo, all sorts of sanguinary vengeance—too fearful to be described; indeed, too shocking for him to realise himself. He, too, is at a stand; what deed of vengeance is coming he cannot tell; it is a little past his control:—

"*I cannot tell.* Things must be as they may. Men may sleep, and they may have their throats about them at that time; and, some say, knives have edges. It must be as it may; though patience be a tired mare, yet she will plod. There must be conclusions. Well, *I cannot tell.*"—*Henry V.*, II., i.

The mock mystery here is so vast, that the formula expressing it must stand at both ends of the speech.

I may rapidly refer to other instances. Benedict, in *Much Ado*, is speculating whether he shall ever fall in love, like Claudio, and present the same ridiculous figure; and he cross-questions himself thus:—

"May I be converted and see with these eyes? *I cannot tell.* I think not. I will not be sworn, but love may transform me to an oyster; but I'll take my oath on it, till he have made an oyster of me, he shall never make me such a fool."—*Much Ado*, II., iii.

This grotesque assumption of perplexity, the pretended cautious but really extravagant assertion, the dramatic

"*stand,*" and the jesting solution, are exquisitely preluded by the formula, "*I cannot tell.*"

Again, Antonio, the Merchant of Venice, commenting on Shylock's description of Jacob's manœuvre to enrich himself at Laban's expense, asks,

> "Was this inserted to make interest good?
> Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?"

Shylock half adopts the fanciful suggestion, or pretends a doubt, which is, of course, unreal. With a shrug of make-believe perplexity, he replies,

> "*I cannot tell.* I make it breed as fast."
> —*Mer. Ven.*, I., iii., 95.

Sometimes the expression occurs in serious discourse, but always with reference to some fantastic notion to which the speaker affects to be unable to commit himself. The note of insincerity is always present. Thus, the wounded soldier in *Macbeth*, describing the heroic behaviour of Macbeth and Banquo in battle, says:—

> "Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
> Or memorize another Golgotha,—
> *I cannot tell.*"—*Macb.*, I., ii., 42.

In *Othello*, too, it is so used as to intensify the pathos of a most pathetic passage. Desdemona, almost maddened by the savage reproaches of her husband, yet tries to find some excuse for his cruelty. In her hysteric agitation, laughter, and tears, earnestness and pretence, cross one another, and it is half in mockery and half in an eager quest for some justification for Othello, that she affects to think his cruelty is only a piece of nursery discipline. For in reply to Iago's question, "How is't with you?" she says.—

> "*I cannot tell.* Those that do teach young babes,
> Do it with gentle means and easy tasks.
> He might have chid me so, for in good faith
> I am a child to chiding."—*Othello*, IV., ii.

Here, again, the recognition of the fantastic force of *I cannot tell*, as showing a counterfeit or pretended doubting, helps us to see the mental state of agitated confusion which expresses itself by mocking, half-jesting surmises.

In *Coriolanus* the phrase is used in a very suggestive way. Tullus Aufidius has conspired with other members of his faction to kill Coriolanus. One of the conspirators addresses Tullus Aufidius,—

> "Most noble sir,
> If you do hold the same intent wherein
> You wished us parties, we'll deliver you
> Of your great danger."

Tullus Aufidius does not wish to commit himself too openly, even before his fellow-conspirators, and accordingly he assumes hesitation—

> "Sir, *I cannot tell;*
> We must proceed as we do find the people."
> —*Cor.*, V., ii., 12.

In this passage the mockery, the fanciful jesting, the fantastic humour that comes out in other uses of the phrase, have all disappeared—only the insincerity remains. It is used to introduce an excuse which is invented for the occasion. So that the assumption of doubt which seems to be the differential character of the phrase remains, where all other qualities have vanished.

I might quote other instances, but I will content myself with a very curious negative instance. In 3 *Henry VI.*, Act II., sc. i., the Earl of Warwick gives a vivid description of the battle between the forces led by himself for the king, and those led by the queen and Clifford on behalf of the young prince. This passage appears in the original version, "The Second Part of the Contention," published in 1595, and in that version the description stands thus :—

> "We at St. Albans met,
> Our battle joined, and both sides fiercely fought.
> But whether 'twas the coldness of the king—
> (He looked full gently on his warlike Queen)
> That robbed my soldiers of their heated spleen,
> Or whether 'twas report of her success,
> Or more than common fear of Clifford's rigour,
> Who thunders to his captains, blood and death,
> *I cannot tell*: but to conclude with truth,"—

and then he proceeds to tell how shamefully they were defeated.

Now in this case, *I cannot tell* is not used, as in the other

cases which I have quoted, to express a mock perplexity; there is no counterfeit, no poetic lie here; the doubt is real. The speaker really is unable, amongst all the possible causes of defeat, to select the true one, or to say how many causes were combined. Precisely the same passage occurs in 3 *Henry VI.*, ii., i., 128; but now *I cannot tell* is changed for *I cannot judge*, evidently because, in the poet's mind, the words *I cannot tell* are applicable only to fantastic cases, not to cases of real and sincere suspense of judgment.

It is probable that this phrase is a reflection of the Latin *Nescio quomodo*, which represents the words in the Latin version of the Essay of Truth. There is, therefore, probably a classic idiom lurking behind the English words, and this is one of the many hints that the writer of Shakespeare was accustomed to use the Latin language in writing, or else that his mind was saturated to overflowing with Latin phraseology. This is a large topic which will require to be discussed at no distant date.

Let no one suppose that I offer this little *excursus* on one comparatively insignificant phrase as a proof that Bacon wrote Shakespeare, and that, if this argument is refuted, the whole case is lost. Not at all. There is, indeed, I claim, a fragment of evidence in this case, which may be credited to the affirmative side of the account; and it is certain that the prose use of the phrase in Bacon casts an interesting light on the passages in Shakespeare where the same language is employed. This is all I claim; but I am myself prepared to attach a much stronger significance to the indication of identical authorship afforded by this class of passages. One feature, and that a very marked and individual feature, pervades all these quotations; and I am inclined to think that the general resemblance running through the whole series is quite as remarkable as any marked feature that may be observed in personal, corporeal characteristics—such as a peculiar step in walking, or a very characteristic form and colour of the hair or beard. It is in small matters that personal identity is shown, and I doubt whether you can find in any two authors such a curious similarity in small traits as those I have indicated. I do not doubt

that instances of the same use of the phrase *I cannot tell* might be ferreted out of other authors by anyone who cared to search for them long and diligently; but for the consistent and repeated adherence to one selected method of employing words which need not be used thus restrictively, I scarcely think you could find two separate authors so agreed. It is, however, remarkably characteristic of Bacon's carefulness in matters of style and expression, and his habit of registering little phrases (such as the *Promus* notes, "What else," "I find it strange," "Nothing less," "Well," "Incident to," "Few words," "Not unlike," &c.), both to give variety to his style, and to fix particular forms of utterance to particular uses.

R. M. Theobald.

BACON'S POETRY.

In the Introduction to the Second Book of the *De Augmentis*, Bacon passes in review those "works or acts that pertain to the advancement of learning," and notes, as a defect, the want of "a closer relationship between all the different Universities of Europe." In eloquent discourse he pictures the various types of brotherhood that already exist, and claims the same fraternal union for scholars. His Latin may be thus rendered :—

Behold the contract and fraternity
Of distant orders and societies,
In various Sovereignties and Territories,
Obedient to their common Governors!
Great Nature has created brotherhoods
To knit the hearts and minds of families.
And arts mechanical form brotherhoods
Joined and compacted in societies.
The balm of God's anointment consecrates
Bishops and Kings in sacred brotherhood.
And vows, and laws monastic are ordained
In holy Church cementing brotherhood.
And shall the generous and noble brotherhood,
'Mongst men of learning and illumination,
Be less esteemed by those who bow in reverence,
—Father of Lights!—before Thy throne Eternal?

FRANCIS BACON'S METAPHORS WITH REGARD TO THE STATE.

By Mrs. Henry Pott.

INTRODUCTION.

So much has been, and continues to be said and written, about the marked difference which is perceptible in the *styles* of Bacon and "Shakespeare," that it seems desirable to inquire a little into this matter, and to raise the question in a definite form:—Is there any marked difference to be detected between the styles of Bacon and "Shakespeare"? If so, in what does the difference consist?

In the first place let us ask, which of the many and various styles of Bacon's prose works are to be compared with the Plays? For his style or manner of writing varies as much as do the subjects of which he treats; as much as the *Merry Wives* differs from *Hamlet*, or the *Comedy of Errors* from *Macbeth* and *The Tempest*; indeed, it differs as much as certain passages differ from others in the same play. It is difficult to recognise in the *Tracts of the Law*, the *Controversies of the Church*, and the *Histories of Life and Death*, and of *Dense and Rare*, the same author as he who penned the *Gesta Grayorum*, and the *Conference of Pleasure*. Who would suspect that the formal though poetic *New Atlantis*, with its Biblical phraseology, flowed from the same fountain as that wonderful piece of easy writing, the *History of Henry the Seventh*? The *Wisdom of the Ancients*, the *Meditationes Sacræ*, the collection of *Apophthegms* or witty sayings, by no means suggest the style of the short poem, *Life's a Bubble*, or the sick-bed *Translations of Certain Psalms;* and, probably, if we were not previously informed on the subject, there would be little or nothing in any of these, to bring to the minds of ordinary readers either of Bacon's greatest prose works, *The Advancement of Learning*, or the *Novum Organum*.

Lord Macaulay's eloquent tribute to the magnificence of Bacon's poetic genius is too well known to be quoted here; yet,

in considering the great variety of garments in which Bacon clothed his thoughts, we must not overlook the just observation, that, in his case, the ordinary process of mental development was reversed; for, in youth, the judgment was already mature, but the poetic faculties expanded and bloomed to perfection only in later life. The "marked difference in style" produced by this increasing poetic power, is illustrated by a comparison of the *Essay of Study*, published in 1592, and the *Essay of Adversity*, which was not published till 1625.

Space does not admit of dissertation on this question, but we ask our readers to think for an instant, what it is that constitutes "style." There seems to be much confusion of ideas in connection with the use of this word. The subject matter of a work is often curiously confounded with its literary composition. Unconsciously, all of us who write of many matters, use various *styles;* we try to adapt our words, and expressions, and allusions, to the intelligence of those with whom we would communicate, and to the circumstances under which our compositions are to be read or uttered. Sometimes we write carelessly, or as the passing thought prompts; at other times we marshall and drill our ideas, and force them to march in stately order. And yet, if, gathering together a quantity of our own letters, jottings, and fragmentary or finished compositions, we were to analyse them carefully, we should find that they all contain certain ingredients combined in certain ways more or less peculiar to ourselves; that, in short, they are, in the truest sense, *compositions,* and composed or put together in a manner or style of our own.

Thus, each writer has his own *vocabulary,* which depends for its richness upon the extent of his own knowledge. He cannot get beyond that, for words are the symbols of thoughts. But then every writer has also his own manner of arranging his words, and this arrangement will depend upon the bent of his mind and genius. A prosaic, business-like man goes straight to the point, using as few words as possible, and caring little for euphony or elegance. He will not indulge in dark sayings, or metaphorical allusions, or antithetical turns of speech. Still less will he attempt "to moralise two meanings in one

word," to invent new phrases, or to coin words from his own mint. But the orator, the poet, the student of language and rhetoric will do all these things, and so, pre-eminently, did Bacon. He had at his command an enormous vocabulary, growing daily in proportion to his increasing knowledge, and recording that advance of knowledge. In order to assist himself in the expression of his great thoughts, at a time when the English language was very poor, he continually grafted into it new words and forms gathered from the Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, and Italian. These he coupled with analagous, but well-known terms, in order to render them intelligible. By frequent repetition he cherished and preserved in the language those forms which he found good and useful, and by neglect he let others die out, which proved themselves unsuited to the soil.

Bacon's style was moreover mightily influenced by his philosophical habit of looking at subjects from all sides. The *Antitheta*, in the *Advancement of Learning*, show that he made this a study. Hence, as we all know, his style became highly antithetical, a characteristic of style which is as notable in the Shakespeare plays as in any of Bacon's prose works.

Again, Bacon's mind was, as he himself perceived, "nimble and apt to perceive analogies," the poet's gift, and one which he used "to inform and teach men" by "fables, parables, similes, and allusions," with which as he says "all things abound."*

Few persons realise the wealth of metaphoric language with which Bacon has adorned his writings, and in which he "wraps" or "delivers" the truths which he wishes to convey. It is customary to look upon "Shakespeare" as a very storehouse of poetic figures and imagery; but it is difficult at once to persuade anyone who has not tested the fact, that Bacon's prose works are almost equally rich in this particular, and that there are but few metaphors or figures of speech in the one group, which do not find their prototypes in

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* *Wisdom of the Ancients. Preface.* "There's figures in *all things*." *Hen. V., IV. vii.*

the other. Yet such is the case. In the process of harmonising the works of Bacon, it has been found desirable to compare, first, the vocabularies of every piece of writing attributed to him as a prose writer, and as author of the "Shakespeare" Plays. Peculiarity of grammar, uses of words, and the collection of private notes which Bacon calls his *Promus*, were in a like manner compared, with a view to testing the elements of similarity or dissimilarity of style, and lastly a kind of dictionary or concordance has been made of all the metaphors, similes, and figurative turns of expression to be found in Bacon's prose and "Shakespeare."

Here, then, we see, arranged alphabetically under about 3,000 headings, nearly 30,000 passages from the prose and the poetry —and, as he turns page after page of this collection, even the most earnest student of Bacon must be startled to find the flowers of language which Bacon pricked into his speeches and legal and philosophic writings, reappearing in the Plays. As may be expected, the poetry is usually more poetic than the prose, but not always; there are instances, and not a few, in which the prose is more poetic than the poetry.

It is almost impossible to think of any subject which "comes home to men's business and bosoms," which is not alluded to in Bacon's metaphors, Almost equally difficult is it to find anything in heaven or earth which is not made to follow his nimble and versatile mind, and to bend and weave itself into some new figure. We can here only afford illustration from one subject, and it shall be one of which William Shakspere could in the nature of things have known but little, but of which Francis Bacon must have known much, since it was the very air which he was forced to breathe—"the air of the Court"—of State, with its parts and appendages, the Sovereign, the Nobility, the People, the Church, Army, Navy, the Law, &c.

The passages selected afford a glimpse of the way in which Bacon founded his poetry upon his facts; for poetic axioms are of no value "except they be drawn from the centre of the sciences." We notice the *Medical Knowledge* displayed by the multitude of figures, in which the Body Politic is compared to the Human Body, its parts and functions, and the diseases,

accidents, and remedies to which it is subject. See under the heads of Balm, Belly, Body, Blood-letting, Bosom, Brood Contagion, Cure, Digestion, Disease, Eye, Foot, Gangrene, Head, Health, Humours, Imposthumations, Infection, Intestine, Jump a body with a dangerous physic, Lap, Members disjoined, Physician, Plaister, Poison, Purge, Remedy, Rub the sore, Salve to the sore, Sinews, Sleep, Spleen, Teeth, Veins, Vital, Wholesome, Wound, Wounds bleed inwards, Wounds Green.

Horticulture is alluded to in passages under Branch, Canker, Cedars and Shrubs, Flowers, Graft, Ground, Grow, Harvest, Hedge, Husbandry, Plant, Reap, Ripe, Sow, Weeds, &c. Bacon's *Meteorology*, the *Ebb and Flow of the Sea*, *History of the Winds*, &c., reappear in metaphors from Celestial or Heavenly Bodies; Clouds, Vapours, Mists, Storm, Tempest, Flood, Earthquake, Foundation, Sea, Tide, Current, Channel, Fountain, Spring, Bark, Weather, Waters troubled, Breach of Waters, Orb, Sphere, &c.

References to *Building* are found in Fabric, Foundation, Frame, Joint and Disjoint, Gate, Model, Pillar, Stair or Ladder, Statues or Images, &c.

The references to *Natural History* in connection with the State, are not so numerous as we might expect—but, few as they are, the examples reflect each other. See Bee, Buzz, Horse, Horse-leach, Pack-horse, Falcon's Pitch, Out of the Shell, Viper, Whelp, &c.

Bacon's numerous notes on *Sport and "Play"* are here found utilised. See Cards packed, Die, Play for a crown, Game, Gamester, Tossed like a ball, &c. His studies on *Sound and Music* are apparent in such passages as those under Concord and Discord, Jarring, Harmony, &c., and a variety of miscellaneous figures which all will remember as "Shakespearian," startle us by their natural though unexpected appearance on the learned pages of Bacon. The points to which attention should be given in considering the following extracts are these:—

1. That, as a rule, the figures are not only similar (thus showing a similarity of fancy and poetic faculty in their

Author), but that they exhibit the same knowledge, opinions, and tastes.

2. In many cases the same words are used in presenting the metaphor, albeit they form no part of the metaphor itself. Thus:—"*As in a theatre*" (see *Theatre*); "*Every vapour* turns not to a storm;" "*Every cloud* engenders not a storm;" "*What* a watch-tower the king keeps," "*What* watch the king keeps;" "Wear the Garland of the crown" (see Flower), "The *clear* Fountain" of conscience, &c.; "*High* pitch of Falcon;" "*As* great engines," "*Like* an engine;" "*Open* the gate of Mercy;" "A *stock* graft;" "*Go pari passu*, hand in hand," "*Walk* hand in hand;" "*Sound* health;" "*Falling into* the lap;" "*Knots knit*;" "*Sit* as Statues," "Tragedy *concluded*," "Troubled waters *muddy, dirty*," "Run *up and down;*" "*Rub* the Sore;" "Play for a *Crown;*" "Watered his *new plants*;" "Wounds *green*;" &c. These examples would be greatly multiplied if whole passages could be given.

3. Two different figures, *the same two*, are sometimes combined. See "Branch Lineament," "Shadow, Painted," "Buzzes, Stings."

4. Or two similar figures are combined. See "Fabric, Frame;" "Frame, Engine;" "Bulwark, Wall;" "Theatre, Acts;" "Vapour, Cloud;" "Vapour, Storm, Blow;" "Olive-branch, Laurel;" "Spark, Fire;" "Fuel, Fire;" "Spur and bridle to make horses *pace*."

5. Or two figures are antithetical. "Law asleep,—awake;" "Head,—foot" of the State; "Fabric,—Foundation;" "In,—Out of Frame;" "Hammered iron,—stubborn, pliant;" "Infection,—Health,—Sickness;" "Iron,—Gold;" "Harmony,—Jarring;" "Concord,—Discord;" "Sun,—Mist."

(*To be continued*).